

Message Text

SECRET

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44

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W
----- 089887

R 201055Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4798

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

S E C R E T PORT LOUIS 0802

EXDIS

DEPT ALSO PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR MARSH, DOD ALSO FOR CINCPAC &
CINCUSNAVEUR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR XO MP

SUBJECT: INDIAN OCEAN AND DIEGO GARCIA

REF: (A) STATE 201428; (B) NEW DELHI 11114; (C) BANGKOK 13687;
(D) STATE 206053

1. SUMMARY: I FEEL OBLIGED TO SAY FRANKLY I DO NOT BELIEVE DEPART-
MENT IS PROCEEDING ON BEST OR WISEST COURSE RE DIEGO. I FEEL WE ARE
ALLOWING OURSELVES TO BE SUCKED ALONG IN WAKE OF EARLIER POSTURES
AND EFFORTS WITHOUT ADEQUATE CONSIDERATION FOR CHANGING CONDITIONS
AND GATHERING STORM CLOUDS. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE US COPE MORE EFFECT-
IVELY WITH SOVIET INFLUENCE AND AMBITIONS AND WITH NON-ALIGNED

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PSYCHOLOGY WHICH MAY SOON PRESENT US WITH TOUGHER COORDINATED

PRESSURES. IT SEEMS TO ME SENATE HAS GIVEN PRESIDENT EXCELL-
ENT DEVICE FOR FLEXIBILITY, WHICH HE COULD WELL USE. MY
DEVIATIONIST RECOMMENDATIONS ARE OUTLINED IN PARA. 6. END
SUMMARY.

2. I HAVE REFRAINED FROM TRYING TO ADD MY PIECE TO
THE INDIAN OCEAN JIGSAW PUZZLE UNTIL I HAD A LITTLE BETTER FEEL FOR T
HE
MOSAIC OF CROSS CURRENTS AND WHIRLPOOLS IN THIS MURKY OCEAN. BUT
NOW WITH STRONG POSSIBILITY OF A POTENTIALLY TROUBLESOME REGIONAL
INDIAN OCEAN CONFERENCE STARING US IN FACE, I THINK I SHOULD OFFER
MY OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

3. I SHARE MOST OF THE VIEWS OF MY LEARNED AND ELOQUENT COLLEAGUES
IN NEW DELHI AND BANGKOK. TO BE SPECIFIED:

(A) I TOO ESPOUSE THE CONCEPT OF AN ADEQUATE US NAVAL PRESENCE
IN THIS AREA, WHEN AND AS GENUINELY NEEDED, TAILORED TO EVENTS,
STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND THE DESIRABILITY
OF OCCASIONALLY SHOWING THE FLAG.

(B) DIEGO IS, I PRESUME, MILITARILY COST-EFFECTIVE, BUT ITS
EXPANSION IS RAPIDLY BECOMING POLITICALLY MORE EXPENSIVE
IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD AT LEAST.

(C) FROM OPTIC OF OUR RELATIONS WITH NON-ALIGNED AROUND HERE
THERE IS MUCH TO BE SAID FOR DELAYING EXPANSION, AS PROPOSED
BY AMBASSADORS MOYNIHAN AND KINTNER, WHILE WE TEST SOVIET
TRACTABILITY AND ACTIONS, MEANWHILE ASKING OUR NAVY
TO GO TO A LITTLE MORE EXPENSE AND INCONVENIENCE BY SUB-
STITUTING FLOATING SUPPORT WHEN NECESSARY.

4. I CAN UNDERSTAND DEPARTMENT'S REASONS (REF A) FOR COMING DOWN
AGAINST RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DELAY AND CHANGES IN TACTICS. I
COULD EVEN ADD SOME REASONS DEPARTMENT DID NOT SEE FIT TO MENTION --
E.G., RISK OF SENDING WRONG SIGNAL TO SOVIETS THAT WE CONTEMPLATING
UNILATERAL RETREAT FROM INDIAN OCEAN AND/OR RISK OF EQUALLY SELF-
DEFEATING SIGNAL TO NON-ALIGNED THAT WE BACKING AWAY FRO FEAR OF
THEIR POLITICAL CLOUT. NEVERTHELESS I AM FAR FROM CONVINCED BY
DEPARTMENT'S REASONING, BECAUSE

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(A) IT SEEMS TOO HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY ACQUIESCENCE IN INERTIAL
MOMENTUM OF OUR EARLIER EFFORTS WITH CONGRESS AND BRITS.

(B) IT IMPLIES, TO ME AT LEAST, FEAR OF LOSING FACE (SHADES AGAIN
OF VIETNAM) IF WE CHANGE OUR PREVIOUS STRATEGY IN ANY WAY.

(C) IT DOES NOT GIVE SUFFICIENT WEIGHT TO GENUINE AND GROWING

RESENTMENT IN THESE PARTS WHICH COULD EVENTUALLY CAUSE US MORE THAN ONE MIGRAINE. SURE, CRITICISMS CAN BE CONSIDERED "MANAGEABLE" SINCE WE CAN NO DOUBT DAMN THE TORPEDOS, PROCEED FULL SPEED AHEAD, AND THEN SUPPLY THE AMERICAN TAIL PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION WITH HEADACHE (RATHER THAN EARTHQUAKE) PILLS. BUT THAT SMACKS MORE OF PRIDE AND STUBBORNNESS THAN COOLLY CALCULATED REALISM.

(D) IT SEEMS TO LARGELY IGNORE THE SENATE RIDER THAT THE PRESIDENT MUST GIVE ASSURANCES THAT NEW DIEGO CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST. ALTHOUGH PERHAPS INTENDED AS A HOOKER TO TEMPORARILY PACIFY CONGRESSIONAL CRITICS BY GIVING THEM A SECOND CRACK AT IMPLEMENTATION, THAT REQUIREMENT COULD PROVIDE THE PRESIDENT WITH USEFUL TACTICAL TOOL FOR FLEXIBILITY AND TIMING.

5. I NEVERTHELESS AGREE THAT IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO POSTPONE THE DECISION. BUT MY REASONS ARE IMMINENCE OF FINAL CONGRESSIONAL ACTION AND PROBABLY EVEN MORE IMMINENT REGIONAL INDIAN OCEAN CONFERENCE WHICH WOULD MOST LIKELY PRESENT US WITH STIFF AND BROADLY COORDINATED CHALLENGE -- A CHALLENGE WHICH MIGHT WELL REFUEL CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE. AND MY CONCLUSION IS THAT WE CAN MAKE BETTER AND WISER DECISION.

6. I RECOMMEND THIS SCENARIO IN FOLLOWING SEQUENCE:

(A) WE TAKE INITIATIVE TO PRESS SOVIETS ON WHAT FORMS AND WHAT LEVELS OF MUTUAL MILITARY RESTRAINTS THEY WOULD ACCEPT IN INDIAN OCEAN.

(B) WE MAKE FORTHRIGHT PUBLIC STATEMENT INCLUDING FOLLOWING ELEMENTS: OUR STRATEGIC REQUIREMENTS FOR NAVAL PRESENCE, OUR RECOGNITION OF SOVIET NEED TO TRANSIT INDIAN OCEAN, OUR CONCERN
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ABOUT SOVIET BASES IN AREA (WITH VERY SPECIFIC REBUTTAL OF RIDICULOUSLY DECEPTIVE SOVIET DENIALS), OUR INITIATIVE TO SEEK REASONABLE MUTUAL RESTRAINTS WITH SOVIETS, OUR RECEPTIVENESS TO ANY CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS TO MAINTAIN PEACE IN INDIAN OCEAN.

(C) WE (PREFERABLY PRESIDENT) INFORM CONGRESS OF OUR INITIATIVE WITH SOVIETS AND HIS INTENTION LEAVE BRIEF BUT REASONABLE INTERVAL FOR SOVIET RESPONSE BEFORE MAKING FINAL DECISION ON HOW FAR AND HOW FAST TO GO IN EXPANDING DIEGO.

(D) AFTER CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF APPROPRIATIONS IF SOVIETS STALL FOR MORE THAN SAY 90 DAYS, WE PROCEED WITH TIME-PHASED EXPANSION WHICH COULD BE SUSPENDED AT ANY STAGE IF AND WHEN SOVIETS BECOME ACCEPTABLY RESPONSIVE.

(E) WHEN EXPANSION STARTS WE PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE ITS NECESSITY AS RELATED, AT LEAST IN PART, TO SOVIET INTRANSIGENCE OR EVASIVENESS.

7. IF WASHINGTON WILLING ADOPT SUCH TACTICS, I RECOMMEND STEPS (A) AND (B) ABOVE BE CARRIED OUT PRIOR TO ANTICIPATED REGIONAL INDIAN OCEAN CONFERENCE FOR MOST USEFUL IMPACT.

8. I RECOGNIZE THAT MAIN THRUST OF FOREGOING RECOMMENDATIONS COULD BE CONSIDERED TO CONFLICT WITH PREVIOUS GUIDANCE (REF D) SINCE MAIN EFFECT OF MY RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD BE TO FOREGO PART OR EVEN ALL OF DIEGO EXPANSION IF, BUT ONLY IF, SOVIETS SPECIFICALLY AGREED TO RESTRAINTS OF SUFFICIENT VALUE TO US. HOWEVER, I CANNOT ESCAPE IMPRESSION THAT PREVIOUS GUIDANCE IS TANTAMOUNT TO TRYING TO TALK OUT OF BOTH SIDES OF OUR MOUTH AT ONCE. ON ONE HAND WE SAY ARMS LIMITATION IN INDIAN OCEAN IS STILL UNDER EXTENSIVE REVIEW AND WE ARE RECEPTIVE TO ANY CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS AS TO RESTRAINTS ON MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THIS AREA. AT SAME TIME WE SAY DIEGO EXPANSION IS NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO ANY GIVEN LEVELS OF SHIP DEPLOYMENTS BUT IS CONSIDERED IN TOTAL CONTEXT OF OUR OVER-ALL POLITICAL AND MILITARY REGIONAL STRATEGY (WHATEVER THAT MEANS AT THIS STAGE). THEN WE SAY THIS IS DETERMINED BY MUCH MORE THAN CURRENT LEVEL OF SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITIES. IF WE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT SEEKING LIMITATIONS OR RESTRAINTS IN INDIAN OCEAN, HOW CAN WE TOTALLY EXEMPT DIEGO FROM PICTURE? FROM SOVIET BEHAVIOR TO DATE HOW-EVER I FOR ONE DO NOT BELIEVE SOVIETS ARE ACTUALLY SERIOUS ABOUT
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ACCEPTING ANY WORTHWHILE MILITARY RESTRAINTS. (FOR ONE THING THEY SEEM TO BE LOCKED IN WITH THEIR SATRAPS IN SOMALIA, ADEN AND IRAQ, AND PRESUMABLY INTEND TO STAY THAT WAY.) THEREFORE I THINK OUR RISK WOULD BE VERY SMALL IN GOING THROUGH THE EXERCISE OF TESTING WITHIN SHORT TIME FRAME SOVIET INTENTIONS. BY HAVING DONE SO, WE WOULD PLACE OURSELVES IN FAR BETTER POSITION TO DEFLECT NON-ALIGNED CRITICISMS AND SUSPICIONS FROM US TO SOVIETS. AS THINGS STAND NOW WE SEEM TO BE BEARING ENTIRE BRUNT WHILE SOVIETS GO HAPPILY AROUND WINNING FRIENDS AND INFLUENCING PEOPLE AT OUR EXPENSE IN THIS REGION.

9. MORE PAROCHIAL BUT NONETHELESS PERTINENT MAURITIAN CONSIDERATIONS WILL BE COVERED SEPTEL. MANHARD

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED DOD.

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NNN

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